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**Contact:** Lorenza Munoz, [213-458-6279](tel:213-458-6279)

**Email:** [lmunoz@bos.lacounty.gov](mailto:lmunoz@bos.lacounty.gov)

**Contact:** Christina Villacorte, [213-447-1277](tel:213-447-1277)

**Email:** [cvillacorte@bos.lacounty.gov](mailto:cvillacorte@bos.lacounty.gov)

## **LA County Expands Safety Net for the Homeless**

The Board of Supervisors voted Tuesday to widen Los Angeles County's safety net for the homeless, deploying teams to help particularly vulnerable populations find permanent supportive housing.

"If we are to end homelessness, we must scale up our response to fit the overwhelming need," said Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas.

His [motion](#), co-sponsored by Supervisor Hilda Solis, follows the recent release of the 2015 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count, which showed a 12-percent increase in homelessness countywide since 2013.

Under the plan approved Tuesday, the county would create seven multi-disciplinary integrated teams (MITs) of medical and mental health professionals to provide "street- and shelter-based intensive engagement and support" for homeless single adults with severe mental illness who may also have substance abuse issues.

Homeless single adults tend to be frequent users of the county's public hospital emergency rooms, and often get tangled up in the criminal justice system.

In their motion, Supervisors Ridley-Thomas and Solis called for identifying funding that could be used to add another team to Skid Row, and to proportionally augment staffing for MITs in South LA, the South Bay and the San Fernando Valley. A report is expected in 60 days.

"It is imperative that resources are targeted to the areas with the greatest geographic burden and need, as demonstrated by the latest homeless count," Supervisor-Ridley Thomas said.

During the homeless count, the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority and volunteers found 41,174 homeless people in Greater Los Angeles. When added to homeless counts in Glendale, Pasadena and Long Beach, Los Angeles County has an estimated 44,359 homeless people on any given night. About two-thirds of homeless persons were "unsheltered" and stayed in places not intended for human habitation, such as vehicles, parks, sidewalks and abandoned buildings.

The "Metro" Los Angeles area accounted for 27.7 percent of homeless single adults countywide, with a concentration in Skid Row. Next in line were South LA, 16.2 percent; the South Bay, 12.1 percent; and the San Fernando Valley, 11.7 percent.

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